

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EUR-12 ACDA-05 SAJ-01 OMB-01 MC-02

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /078 W

----- 008906

R 021230Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY SANA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7255

INFO AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

S E C R E T SANA 0339

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, YE

SUBJECT: SOVIET ARMS TO YEMEN

REF: SANA 293

SUMMARY: CONTRARY TO REFTEL, THERE MAY HAVE BEEN NO
MIG-21'S DELIVERED TO YAR OVER LAST WEEKEND.

1. REFTEL WAS WRITTEN AFTER SOVIET SHIP WITH DECK
CARGO OF SIX MIG-21 CRATES WAS SEEN DOCKED IN HODEIDA
BY EMBOFF ON 29 JANUARY. WE ASSUMED THESE WERE AIRCRAFT
WHICH GHASHMI HAD TWICE TOLD US WERE ENROUTE AND
WHICH INTELLIGENCE REPORTS LED US TO EXPECT.

2. EMBOFF ABLE MONITOR UNLOADING OF SHIP MUCH BUT NOT
ALL OF TIME IT IN PORT AND ON HIS RETURN TO
SANAA 31 JANUARY HE REPORTED THAT HE
SAW SHIP DEPART HODEIDA WITH ALL SIX CRATES
ON BOARD. HE SPOTTED ONE TRACKED VEHICLE BEING

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UNLOADED, APPARENTLY SOME TYPE OF ARTILLERY TRACTOR OR

TANK RECOVERY VEHICLE. SUBSEQUENTLY ANOTHER EMBOFF, WHO ALSO IN HODEIDA ON OTHER BUSINESS, COUNTED FIVE OF APPARENTLY SAME TYPE OF TRACKED VEHICLE. FROM GUIDES AVAILABLE AT POST EMBOFFS CANNOT POSITIVELY IDENTIFY VEHICLE, BUT ITS CRANE AND TRUCK TYPE CABIN, WINDOWS SUGGEST IT IS TRACTED ARMORED ENGINEERING, OR TANK RECOVERY VEHICLE, NOT FIGHTING VEHICLE.

2. WE COULD CONCEIVABLY HAVE MISSED UNLOADING OF MIG-21'S DURING FIRST DAY SHIP IN HODEIDA, BEFORE EMBOFF SAW IT. IF SO, HOWEVER, AIRCRAFT BOXES NOT RPT NOT AT HODEIDA AIRPORT.

3. OTHER CRATES BEING UNLOADED WERE SMALL, SUGGESTING SPARE PARTS AND MAYBE ENGINES AND AMMO. VOLUME WAS NOT GREAT.

4. EMBOFF SIGHTED SOME LIGHT TOWED GUNS, APPARENTLY 45MM OR 57MM ANTI-TANK TYPE.

5. SHIP WAS MET BY CHIEF OF STAFF AHMED AL-GHASHMI AND SOVIET MILITARY DELEGATION WHICH IN COUNTRY FOR OCCASION.

COMMENT: SO FAR AS WE CAN TELL AT THE MOMENT, THE ONE SHIPMENT TO DATE LOOKS LIKE LIMITED ONE WHICH HAMDI HAS BEEN DESCRIBING TO US, BRITS, JORDANIANS, AND SOME SAUDIS. IT CERTAINLY TOO EARLY TO CLOSE THE DOOR ON ADVANCED SOVIET AIRCRAFT AND TANKS FOR YAR HOWEVER. A DISGRUNTLED AIR FORCE OFFICER INSISTS THAT THERE IS A DEAL FOR 12 MIG-17'S, 12 MIG-21'S, 4 MI-8 HELOS AND 4 AN-26 TRANSPORTS. HE SAYS TRAINEES HAVE LEFT YAR FOR EIGHT MONTH MIG-21 CONVERSION COURSE IN SOVIET UNION. WE WILL PURSUE THESE MATTERS THROUGH OTHER SOURCES IN COMING DAYS.
RANSOM

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